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ABSTRACT

The shift from a predominantly rural American society to one where three-quarters of the people reside in urban areas has been largely the result of migration. Migration has been and will continue to be the key population process in rural America. The relationship between migration and the other components of population change, and their joint effects on the population structure of rural America are the themes of this monograph. Migration, fertility, and mortality are influenced by (1) demographic composition; (2) social and economic conditions; (3) cultural values and expectations; (4) racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic characteristics of the population; and (5) the interactive effects of migration, fertility, and morality on each other. Chapter 1 describes various theoretical and methodological issues in the study of migration. Chapter 2 presents a brief description of the major social, economic, and political events of the three historical eras of rural population change between 1650 and the present, establishing the social environment within which the population restructuring of rural America has occurred. Chapters 3 through 6 describe in greater detail rural population changes throughout American history. Chapter 7 focuses on some institutional forces that have shaped the study and interpretation of rural population change. The final chapter summarizes the major changes in rural America and the role of migration in shaping the rural population of today. This book includes many statistical figures and cites numerous references. (ALL)

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Appendix 15

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